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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/710,897	08/11/2004	John M. Tiesler	04966 (LC 0163 PUS)	4896
36014	7590	10/03/2007		
ARTZ & ARTZ, P.C. 28333 TELEGRAPH ROAD, SUITE 250 SOUTHFIELD, MI 48034			EXAMINER FIGUEROA, FELIX O	
			ART UNIT 2833	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 10/03/2007	DELIVERY MODE PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/710,897

Applicant(s)

TIESLER ET AL.

Examiner

Felix O. Figueroa

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 13 July 2007.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,6-12,14,16-18 and 21-24 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,2,6-12,14,16-18 and 21-24 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- 6) ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_.

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Claim Objections***

Claims 1, 2, 6-12, 14, 16-18 and 21-24 are objected to because of the following informalities:

In claims 1, 16 and 24, "t" should be --T--, in order to accurately describe the invention. Similar corrections should be made to the specification.

In claim 6 line 2, "the" should be deleted; and --of the plurality-- should be inserted after "one".

Appropriate correction is required.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which the subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-3, 6, 7, 9-12, 14, 16-18, 23 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dutta (US 5,599,086) in view of Marmaropoulos et al. (US 6,854,988).

Dutta discloses vehicle overhead module powerstrip assembly comprising: at least one overhead attachment strip (18) configured to couple to a vehicle overhead structure; at least one electrically conductive strip (50) coupled to the at least one attachment strip; and a plurality of modular connector (at 54,56, see col. 2 lines 55-57), each comprising a plurality of electrical contacts having a plurality of attachment

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positions (Fig.1) along the at least one electrically conductive strip, the plurality of modular connector removable from the conductive strip (col.4 lines 28-29), positioned interchangeable with each other, and configured to couple an overhead electronic module (24) to the at least one electrically conductive strip.

Dutta discloses substantially the claimed invention except for the specific configuration of the attachment strip. Marmaropoulos teaches at least one attachment strip (10) including a t-shaped main center member having a t-body and a t-cap; at least one electrically conductive strip (50) coupled to the at least one attachment strip, the at least one electrically conductive strip comprising a power strip positioned on the t-body and a ground strip (center 50) positioned on the t-cap; a plurality of modular connectors (at 100) each of which comprising a plurality of electrical contacts (110, 115, 150) having a plurality of attachment positions along the at least one electrically conductive strip, the plurality of modular connectors removable from the at least one electrically conductive strip, position interchangeable with each other, and configured to couple at least one electronic module (100) to the at least one electrically conductive strip; at least one flange (20) that covers at least a portion of the at least one electrically conductive strip, the at least one flange is flexible and flexes outward when the plurality of modular connectors are removed to at least partially cover and prevent access to the at least one conductive strip to enclose/seal the conductive member (see Abstract). Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use an attachment strip including a T-shaped member and at

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least one flexible flange, as taught by Marmaropoulos, to enclose/seal the conductive member.

Regarding claims 2 and 3, Dutta, as modified by Marmaropoulos, discloses the at least one attachment strip being a single extruded component; comprising at least one flange (not labeled, Figs. 2 and 3) that covers at least a portion of the at least one electrically conductive strip.

Regarding claim 6, Dutta, as modified by Marmaropoulos, discloses the at least one attachment strip applying pressure on the at least one modular connector to maintain electrical contact between the at least one electrically conductive strip and the at least one modular connector.

Regarding claim 7, Dutta, as modified by Marmaropoulos, discloses the at least one electrically conductive strip comprising a positively charged electrically conductive strip (50) and a negatively charged electrically conductive strip (52).

Regarding claim 9, Marmaropoulos discloses the plurality of electrical contacts comprising a ground contact, having spring characteristics, such that it is in compression when in contact with the a ground strip of the at least one electrically conductive strip.

Regarding claim 10, Marmaropoulos discloses the at least one overhead attachment strip comprising a plurality of channels, at least a portion of the plurality of electrical contacts extend into the plurality of channels and are in contact with the at least one electrically conductive strip therein.

Regarding claim 11, Marmaropoulos discloses the plurality of electrical contacts comprising a first power contact; and a second power contact having a physical spreading resistance relative to the first power contact to maintain electrical contact with the at least one electrically conductive strip.

Regarding claim 12, Dutta, as modified by Marmaropoulos, discloses the plurality of electrical contacts being slidable along the at least one electrically conductive strip.

Regarding claim 14, Dutta, as modified by Marmaropoulos, discloses the at least one modular connector comprises at least one insulator separating the plurality of electrical contacts; and the insulator comprising a plurality of module attachment holes (Fig. 1 of Marmaropoulos).

Regarding claim 16, Dutta discloses a vehicle overhead console comprising: at least one track (62); a plurality of overhead console modules (24) transitional and position interchangeable along the at least one track; and at least one vehicle overhead module powerstrip assembly (54,56) comprising: at least one overhead attachment strip (18) configured to couple to a vehicle overhead structure; at least one electrically conductive strip (50,52) coupled to the at least one attachment strip; and a plurality of removable and modular connector (at 54,56) coupled to the overhead modules and comprising a plurality of electrical contacts (54,56) having a plurality of attachment positions along the at least one electrically conductive strip, the plurality of modular connector configured to couple and allow separation of the plurality of overhead electronic modules (col.4 lines 28-29) to and from the at least one electrically conductive strip.

Dutta discloses substantially the claimed invention except for the specific configuration of the attachment strip. Marmaropoulos teaches at least one attachment strip (10) including a t-shaped main center member having a t-body and a t-cap; at least one electrically conductive strip (50) coupled to the at least one attachment strip, the at least one electrically conductive strip comprising a power strip positioned on the t-body and a ground strip (center 50) positioned on the t-cap; a plurality of modular connectors (at 100) each of which comprising a plurality of electrical contacts (110, 115, 150) having a plurality of attachment positions along the at least one electrically conductive strip, the plurality of modular connectors removable from the at least one electrically conductive strip, position interchangeable with each other, and configured to couple at least one electronic module (100) to the at least one electrically conductive strip; at least one flange (20) that covers at least a portion of the at least one electrically conductive strip, the at least one flange is flexible and flexes outward when the plurality of modular connectors are removed to at least partially cover and prevent access to the at least one conductive strip to enclose/seal the conductive member (see Abstract). Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use an attachment strip including a T-shaped member and at least one flexible flange, as taught by Marmaropoulos, to enclose/seal the conductive member.

Regarding claim 17, Dutta, as modified by Marmaropoulos, discloses the at least one overhead attachment strip being coupled to the at least one track via at least one fastening device (70).

Regarding claim 18, Dutta, as modified by Marmaropoulos, discloses the at least one electronic module having an infinite number of module positions relative to the track (Fig.1) and receives power from the at least one electrically conductive strip in each of the module positions.

Regarding claim 23, Dutta, as modified by Marmaropoulos, discloses the modules comprising a plurality of electronic modules.

Regarding claim 24, Dutta discloses a vehicle overhead console comprising: at least one track (62); at least one vehicle overhead console module powerstrip assembly (54,56) coupled to the at least one track and comprising; at least one overhead attachment strip (18) configured to couple to a vehicle overhead structure; and at least one electrically conductive strip (50,52) coupled to the at least one attachment strip; and a plurality of overhead modules (24) transitional, removable, and position interchangeable along the at least one track and comprising at least one modular connector (at 54,56) having at least one electrical contact for coupling to the at least one electrically conductive strip.

Dutta discloses substantially the claimed invention except for the specific configuration of the attachment strip. Marmaropoulos teaches at least one attachment strip (10) including a t-shaped main center member having a t-body and a t-cap; at least one electrically conductive strip (50) coupled to the at least one attachment strip, the at least one electrically conductive strip comprising a power strip positioned on the t-body and a ground strip (center 50) positioned on the t-cap; a plurality of modular connectors (at 100) each of which comprising a plurality of electrical contacts (110, 115, 150)

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having a plurality of attachment positions along the at least one electrically conductive strip, the plurality of modular connectors removable from the at least one electrically conductive strip, position interchangeable with each other, and configured to couple at least one electronic module (100) to the at least one electrically conductive strip; at least one flange (20) that covers at least a portion of the at least one electrically conductive strip, the at least one flange is flexible and flexes outward when the plurality of modular connectors are removed to at least partially cover and prevent access to the at least one conductive strip to enclose/seal the conductive member (see Abstract). Therefore, it would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use an attachment strip including a T-shaped member and at least one flexible flange, as taught by Marmaropoulos, to enclose/seal the conductive member.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which the subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 8, 21 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Dutta in view of Tiesler et al. (US 6,575,528).

Dutta discloses substantially the claimed invention except for the location of the strip. Tiesler teaches the use of a strip along a longitudinal centerline of a vehicle, thus improving accessibility of the modules. Therefore, it would have been obvious to a

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person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the strip of Dutta along a longitudinal centerline, as taught by Tiesler, to improve accessibility of the modules.

Regarding claims 21 and 22, Tiesler teaches the use of a variety of modules, such as audio and video modules. It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to use the assembly of Dutta with different types of modules, as taught by Tiesler, to provide a secure and versatile positioning of the modules.

### ***Conclusion***

This is a continuation of applicant's earlier Application No. 10/710,897. All claims are drawn to the same invention claimed in the earlier application and could have been finally rejected on the grounds and art of record in the next Office action if they had been entered in the earlier application. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL** even though it is a first action in this case. See MPEP § 706.07(b). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

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the advisory action. In no, however, event will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Felix O. Figueroa whose telephone number is (571) 272-2003. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon.-Fri., 10:00am-6:00pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paula A. Bradley can be reached on (571) 272-2800 Ext. 33. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Felix O. Figueroa/  
Primary Examiner  
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